

APRIL 20 WEBCHAT TO FOCUS ON COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

WASHINGTON, APRIL 18 – Sharon Cohn, vice president of interventions for the International Justice Mission (IJM), will discuss her organization's efforts to combat illegal trafficking and other violence against women and girls worldwide during a USINFO webchat April 20 at 10 a.m. EDT (1400 GMT, 8 p.m. Bangladesh Time).

Violence against women takes many forms, including trafficking in persons, a form of modern-day slavery whereby women and girls -- and men and boys also -- face forced labor and sexual exploitation in many countries around the world.

The International Justice Mission is a human rights agency that aids victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression worldwide. Cohn and her colleagues at IJM play an important role in rescuing victims of traffickers and targeting and prosecuting perpetrators. Based on reports of abuse received from relief and development organizations, IJM conducts investigations of abuse and mobilizes intervention on behalf of victims. In 2003, Cohn led an operation in Cambodia that led to the rescue of 37 child trafficking victims, the youngest of whom was 5 years old. She directed the cases to trial in Cambodia, which led to eight convictions with sentences ranging from five to 20 years imprisonment.

Cohn currently directs IJM's operations in West Africa, Latin America, South Asia and Southeast Asia, where she develops intervention strategies and serves as an advocate for victims with local and national governments.

If you would like to participate in this webchat, please sign up on the USINFO Webchat registration page (<http://usinfo.state.gov/utls/chatemailreg.php>). Please tell us your preferred screen name; use of full names is not required.

If you have participated in one of our previous webchats, please use the same user name and password. You may submit questions in advance to usinfowebchat@state.gov (<mailto:usinfowebchat@state.gov>) or directly during the webchat.

The transcript of this webchat will be available in USINFO's Webchat Station (<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html>), where information about upcoming webchats is also available.

Questions and comments are accepted in advance of and any time during the program. You may also e-mail (usinfowebchat@state.gov) questions without registering.

For additional information, see Human Trafficking (http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/human_trafficking.html) and Democracy Dialogues (http://www.democracy.gov/dd/eng_democracy_dialogues/womens_rights.html).

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